

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 175651

FOR UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, AF

SUBJEC BACKGROUND PAPER ON HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN
AFGHANISTAN

1. DURING THE REVOLUTION PRESIDENT DAOUD AND MANY MEMBERS
OF HIS FAMILY AND OFFICIALS OF HIS GOVERNMENT WERE KILLED
IN A SHOOT OUT WITH THE REBELS. IN THE FOLLOWING DAYS
SEVERAL FAMILIES WHO WERE RELATED TO THE FORMER KING
AND TO DAOUD WERE DETAINED. OUR EMBASSY ESTIMATES THAT
400-600 INDIVIDUALS ARE BEING HELD AT A PRISON OUTSIDE OF
KABUL. THE VIOLENCE WHICH OCCURRED DURING THE COUP AND THE
SUBSEQUENT ARRESTS HAVE TROUBLED THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER
COUNTRIES AND THERE HAVE BEEN NUMEROUS EXPRESSIONS OF CON-
CERN. MANY AFGHAN DIPLOMATS WHO WERE ABROAD DURING THE
COUP HAVE REFUSED TO RETURN TO AFGHANISTAN AND ARE SEEKING
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ASYLUM IN THE US AND IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

2. ON THE OTHER HAND THERE ARE RECENT REPORTS THAT AS MANY
AS 1,000 DAOUD ERA PRISONERS HAVE BEEN RELEASED. THUS IT
IS DIFFICULT TO MAKE GENERALIZATIONS ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS
RECORD OF THIS NEW GOVERNMENT ALTHOUGH THE EVIDENCE TO DATE
IS NOT ENCOURAGING.

3. AFTER THE REVOLUTION AMBASSADOR ELIOT IN HIS CALLS ON TARAKI AND AMIN DESCRIBED OUR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES AND EXPRESSED OUR CONCERNS ABOUT THE REPORTED DEATHS AND ARRESTS. HAL SAUNDERS IN HIS CONVERSATION WITH AMIN IN NEW YORK EXPRESSED SIMILAR CONCERNS. AMIN TOLD SAUNDERS THAT IF ANYBODY IS WILLING TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF THESE WOMEN AND CHILDREN THEY COULD BE RELEASED.

4. IN COORDINATION WITH THE BRITISH WE MADE AN APPROACH TO THE RED CROSS IN GENEVA SUGGESTING THAT THEY SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO KABUL TO DISCUSS THE RELEASE OF THESE PRISONERS (PARTICULARLY THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN). AS A RESULT DOMINIQUE BOREL OF THE RED CROSS VISITED KABUL FROM JUNE 29 TO JULY 3 AND MET WITH TARAKI AND OTHER AFGHAN OFFICIALS. BOREL THEN VISITED BURMA AND WAS EXPECTED TO RETURN TO KABUL ON TUESDAY JULY 11 FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS. WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO OBTAIN ANY INFORMATION FROM THE ICRC ABOUT HIS VISIT. BOREL IS NOT EXPECTED TO RETURN TO GENEVA UNTIL JULY 17 AT WHICH TIME THE ICRC WILL FURNISH OUR MISSION WITH A REPORT OF HIS TRIP. CHRISTOPHER

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